



Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

Mayor Raymond M. Morriss
Councilman Richard J. “Rock” Cioni
Councilman Eugene T. Frazier
Councilman James L. Furstenberg
Councilwoman Laurie P. Marchini

City Administrator Jeffrey F. Silka
City Solicitor Michael S. Cohen
City Clerk Allison K. Layton

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WORK SESSION

City Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room
57 N. Liberty Street
Cumberland, MD 21502

Tuesday, March 21, 2023, 5:15 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Raymond M. Morriss; Council Members: Richard Cioni, Eugene Frazier, Jimmy Furstenberg, Laurie Marchini

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Silka, City Administrator; Allison Layton, City Clerk; Michael Cohen, City Solicitor; Chuck Ternent, Chief of Police

Media: Bryan Gowans, WCBC Radio

Teresa McMinn, Cumberland Times-News

I. PARKING OVERVIEW

Mr. Silka provided a PowerPoint presentation and discussed the Overview. He said that in his mind there is no such thing as ‘free parking’ because it’s not free to operate, and explained that paid parking is the norm in cities, and travelers expect to pay for it. He stated that the presentation provides a foundation for future discussions, and focuses on the financial management of the MPA, parking rates and enforcement, as well as technology and infrastructure. He added that the presentation will be discussed in 3 more Work Sessions.

Mr. Silka pointed out the map attached to the presentation, showing all parking in the City – garages, kiosks, hourly, and permit parking. He went over the financial review and goals for the MPA fund. Mr. Silka explained that fines and forfeiture collections have not returned to pre-pandemic levels, but are trending that way

Mr. Silka reviewed parking enforcement, from warnings to fines to impoundments, and provided totals of warnings and fines city-wide for the period 1/01/21 – 06/13/22. He went over parking meters and kiosk locations, and kiosk revenue by location. He mentioned rented meter bags for construction/business vehicles taking up spaces all day, and suggested paid event parking.

Mr. Silka advised on staffing levels – full and part-time – for the MPA, and personnel costs by fiscal year. He said issues for later discussion include:

- Ticketing on first offense
- Equipment needs
- Infrastructure needs
- Staffing and Enforcement
- Frederick Street Garage fees
- Rate increases

Mr. Silka stated that there will be an up-to-date financial provided as part of the FY24 budget, and said specific Work Sessions will be scheduled to discuss and determine policy objectives. Mr. Silka also discussed a proposal for an incentive program for the first 2 hours free at the George Street Garage, and also an incentive program for bulk monthly parking. He then opened up the floor for questions:

There was discussion about monthly parking fees in major cities – Baltimore, Philadelphia, Boston – all way over \$100/month. There was discussion on business owners and employees taking up prime spots, and discussion on the free app, ParkMobile. Salary for staff monitoring parking was also discussed.

II. CEDC ALLOCATION

Mr. Silka discussed pay adjustments – on the public agenda tonight - and whether the CEDC has the budget to cushion the allocation for their employees, to receive the same raises that City employees will receive. Mr. Silka explained that their budget has remained static since 2015. He proposed a \$50K allocation to add to the CEDC's \$350K allocation.

Mayor Morriss discussed the original MOU of \$350 with the CEDC, which has been in place for almost 9 years now. Mr. Silka advised that the \$350K-\$400K is the CEDC's entire budget, salaries included.

III. AGENDA REVIEW – MARCH 21, 2023

Mayor Morriss asked for any questions regarding tonight's public agenda. Council Member Furstenberg posed a question about Resolution 2023-01ANNX regarding the land annexation owned by the Ali Ghan Club. Mr. Cohen explained that the area being annexed would be used as a waste transfer station, which involves transferring waste from one truck to another – not creating a landfill.

There was discussion about Order 27200 regarding the closing of the 2nd floor in City Hall to the general public, making it a dedicated work space. He mentioned that signage had arrived today, a receptionist desk on the first floor had been set up, and most importantly the elevator will be modified to not allow the general public access to the 2nd floor. He said people must ask permission to see people upstairs and can not do so without staff intervention.

IV. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Council Member Frazier reminded everyone about the Fair Housing event at Allegany College. He also mentioned that Melinda Kelleher did a great job with the Baltimore Street Redesign Groundbreaking Ceremony, and said he did not expect to see that many people there.

Council Member Furstenberg asked if the City ever meets with the Landlord's Association. The Mayor advised that every once in a while they will request a meeting, and stated that as with a lot of things, fees need to be evaluated to be more reasonable to the City.

Council Member Cioni mentioned the Easter Egg Hunt at Constitution Park on April 7th, and advised to reach out to the P&R Director Ryan Mackey if anyone would like to donate prizes or money.

Mayor Morriss mentioned that the new Easter Bunny costume is fantastic, and was no cost to the City as Mr. Mackey brought it with him when he took the job.

Council Member Cioni advised that Sue Rudd has volunteered to get a Friends of Constitution Park group started – loosely based on what is done at Rocky Gap.

Council Member Marchini advised that there will be an Easter event downtown, and stated that the new website Reimagine Cumberland has a category for questions about project updates. She also mentioned that more signage is coming as construction begins, specifically Open for Business signage. Ms. Marchini also talked about the Lakota Group being here 2 weeks ago being taken around the City. She stated that they will be back.

Mayor Morriss stated that last week he met with Congressman Trone, and collected a big check, \$4.8M for the Fayette Street Bridge project. He added that Trone has been constituent-friendly and a great supporter.

The Mayor talked about how well the Baltimore Street groundbreaking event went, and said it was good to have the Comptroller and the Secretary of Commerce there. He also mentioned that RAZ Development will be here tomorrow to sign the agreement/deed to 19 Frederick Street.

Mayor Morriss advised on the Allegany Museum board meeting, and said the museum is doing well, and the Crossroads exhibit is very successful. He also said the Hooley Pub Crawl was another success, from his perspective.

V. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Allison K. Layton

City Clerk

Minutes approved on: April 18, 2023